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ABSTRACT

This investigation was conducted to identify the level of attainment, the degree of sophistication, and the extent to which preservice teachers at Eastern Kentucky University are aware of, understand, appreciate, respect, and value multicultural education. Kentucky recognizes the significance of diversity and includes it in its valued learners outcome. Multicultural education is therefore addressed in a majority of education courses, and embedded in many required courses. A sample consisting of student teachers (N=115) was asked to write a comprehensive definition of multicultural education. A definition adopted by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education was analyzed, levels of depth and sophistication were identified, and quality indicators were given a numeric value. Data analysis supported the fact that multicultural education is addressed during preservice teacher education--65 percent of the students are aware of cultural differences compared to 19 percent who know nothing, and 10 percent have some understanding of diversity. While an adequate level of awareness exists, if this is considered in relation to the criteria suggested by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, it must be concluded that this level of awareness is not sufficient. To prepare preservice teachers to function effectively in a multicultural society, current efforts need to be improved. (LL)

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ED 367 652

EVALUATION OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN A PRESERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM

by

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presented

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Two major factors affecting education today are demography and economics. The demographic changes occurring in the United States, as described by Fradd (1987) shown Table 1, are noteworthy. Whereas the White, non-Hispanic population is showing a steady and rapid decline the other minority groups are steadily growing; some more rapidly than others.

Insert Table 1 about here

The competitive capitalist economic system is being gradually replaced by an interdependent economic reality and cooperative economic ventures. European and Asian Common Markets are making it necessary for the United States to pursue a new cooperative economic era with its immediate neighbors to the north and the south- The North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This economic agreement would result in an even greater communication and interaction among people across the borders. The economically interdependent era would have its impact on the educational system currently prevalent in the U. S.

One of the impacts of the demographic changes and the new economic reality on education is the need for multicultural education. The American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) perceived the need for multicultural education in 1973 and issued a policy statement on it. It defined the concept as follows:

> Multicultural education is education which values cultural pluralism. Multicultural education rejects the view that schools should seek to melt away cultural differences or the view that schools should merely tolerate cultural pluralism. To endorse cultural pluralism is to endorse the principle that there is no one model American. To endorse cultural pluralism is to understand and appreciate the differences that exist among the nations's citizens. It is to see these differences as a positive force in the continuing development of a society which professes a wholesome respect for the intrinsic worth of every individual (p.264). Multicultural education. (AACTE)

Subsequently the National Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (NCATE) adopted multicultural education as one of its criteria. Thus, multicultural education became a mandate for all NCATE approved teacher preparation programs in the country.

The history of multicultural education in Kentucky has been slightly different. Over the years the Kentucky Department of Education has historically used NCATE Standards for the state accreditation of all teacher education programs in the Commonwealth. Therefore, the multicultural education criterion has been applied to every teacher education program in Kentucky, whether it was a NCATE institution or not.

The Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), passed in 1990, also recognized the significance of diversity and included it in its valued learners outcomes.

Of the 75 valued learners outcomes at least 20 either directly or indirectly refer to diversity. These are given in Table 2. A Multicultural Education Branch has been established in the Division of Professional Development, Kentucky Department of Education, to support, encourage, and promote multicul tural education.

Insert Table 2 about here

The Multicultural Education Branch has developed a definition of multicultural education which has been approved by the Kentucky State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. This definition articulates the State's philosophy of multicultural education as follows:

> Multicultural education means interdisciplinary, cross-curricular education which prepares students to live, learn, and work together to achieve common goals in a culturally diverse world. It enables all students to be aware of and affirmed in their own cultural roots and allows all students to understand and value diversity, fostering appreciation, respect, and understanding for persons of different backgrounds. It prepares students to live fruitful lives in an increasingly global society with decreasing borders.

From this definition it appears that the Kentucky Department of Education considers multicultural education to be essential for Kentucky students to function competently in a culturally diverse and globally interdependent and interconnected society. Teachers today are therefore responsible for providing multicultural education in their classrooms. The responsibility is in fact twofold: (1) teaching culturally diverse students, and, (2) preparing students for a culturally diverse society?

In Kentucky all teacher education programs are expected and required, in order to meet both State and NCATE accreditation standards, to prepare teachers competent to perform their afore-mentioned twofold responsibilities. In compliance with the multicultural education criterion of the State and NCATE they have been providing multicultural education to both preservice and inservice teachers. The implementation of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) has only provided an additional emphasis on the topic.

Purpose

This investigation was conducted to identify the level of attainment and the degree of sophistication among preservice teachers concerning multicultural education. The objectives were to discern the extent to which the preservice teachers were aware of multicultural education, understood it, appreciated, respected, valued, or encouraged it.

Methodology

The subjects were Fall 1992 student teachers, 115 in all, majoring in early elementary, middle grade, secondary, and special education at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU). The number of student teachers by their major is represented in Table 3.

Insert Table 3 about here

At their seminar meeting all of them were given a sheet of paper with a prompt: Multicultural education is ... . In addition to identifying their major the subjects were asked to give a comprehensive definition of multicultural education. They were told that the definitions supplied by them would be used in a research study. Their anonymity was emphasized.

The definition of multicultural education adopted by the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education was analyzed by this researcher and three collaborators, all caucasians, veteran teachers in the neighboring school districts, one each at the early childhood, middle school, and high school level. The four carefully reviewed the definition of multicultural education adopted by the State Board of Education and identified its different levels of depth and sophistication. Quality indicators in the state definition were given a numeric value. A scoring guide ranging from one to ten was considered. After considerable discussion consensus was reached on a scoring guide ranging from one to six. The scoring guide was then compared to Bloom's Taxonomy of Education. The four scorers held a practice session in the application of the scoring guide and the assigning of points on a set of data collected of another group. Variances in scores among the four were discussed. Discrepancies were clarified. Remediation for discrepant readers was provided at this time. This practice session led to the finding of some blank and irrelevant responses. A score of zero was therefore added to the scoring guide, shown in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 about here

Another trial run was performed; this time to achieve consistency and establish inter-scorer reliability. After assuring reliability, each of the four investigators read each definition independently and individually and scored it according to the scoring guide developed for this purpose. Scores of each of the four readers were recorded and summed. Six responses were eliminated from the data because a variance in scoring of one or less point was not obtained. Individual means were computed for the remaining 109 subjects. Mean, mode, and median scores for the group were computed.

Results

The data analysis performed yielded a range of scores from 0 to 5.5. The statistical procedures resulted in a group mean score of 1.40, median and

mode score of 1.25. A complete descriptive statistics profile is shown in Table 5. A ranked item analysis indicated that 31 subjects obtained an individual mean score of 1.25 which was the group median and mode score. A total of 21 subjects had individual mean scores of less than 1.0. A total of 48 subjects earned individual mean scores between 1.0 and 2.0. Only one subject had an individual mean score of 2.0. Nine subjects attained individual mean scores between 2.0 and 3.0. Of the 109 subjects a total of 8 achieved individual mean scores of 3.0 or above. The ranked item scores are presented in Table 6. A frequency table at .5 interval showed that 19% of the subjects scored individual mean scores of .5 or less. About 65% of the subjects were at the awareness level. About 10% were at the understanding level followed by 4%, 3%, and 1% respectively at the acceptance, respect, and value levels. Table 7 represents the frequency distribution.

Discussion

Multicultural education is considered to be an important part of education. According to the course syllabi, multicultural education is addressed in a majority of the courses in the College of Education. Additionally, it is embedded in many other general education courses required of preservice teachers. The median and mode score in this study was 1.25 which was lower than the group mean score of 1.40. A higher mean score is attributed to the eight individual scores between 3.0 and 5.5. The low mean, median and the mode scores have contributed to a skewed distribution.

Results of this study support the fact that multicultural education is addressed in preservice education. Compared to 19% of the subjects who do not know anything about diversity 65% of the preservice teachers are aware of cultural differences. Another 10% have some understanding of diversity. A few preservice teachers have benefited from their multicultural education to a degree where they accept, respect, and value it.

Several explanations may be offered to explain the low scores of the subjects. It is possible that the courses are intended to only make the students aware of diversity and, therefore, a large majority of preservice teachers in the study fell at the awareness level.

Individualism and independence is a characteristic of academia. Academic freedom is guarded by individual faculty members. Generally members of the faculty work individually and seldom do they collaborate with other colleagues. It is quite likely that individual faculty members touch upon multicultural education in their courses and develop an awareness about it in their students. There is no developmental sequence or progression in objectives from one course to the other and therefore students' competence in multicultural education is mostly limited to an awareness level.

The subjects were given a prompt which structured the task required of them. The structure may have inhibited some students from expressing their ideas. For many students the goal is not to receive education but to get a degree. They take courses to count the credit hours. What they learn in a course they often forget upon its completion. These students study in order to pass the tests and examinations. They do not internalize the information specially when the information does not relate with their immediate environment and needs.

An overwhelming majority of preservice teachers are residents of Kentucky, which is reputed to be a homogeneous state. For a majority of this population multicultural education is an unknown and unfamiliar concept. A majority of the preservice teachers are not exposed to diversity, do not relate to it and perhaps do not approach it with any degree of seriousness.

A majority of the preservice teachers at Eastern Kentucky University are from the south and southeast of Kentucky which is quite rural in nature. Multicultural education is not well received by a number of these students. They do not accept it and some are openly opposed to cultural differences. Their inner resistance to multicultural education may have interfered with the attainment of higher levels of multicultural education.

The subjects were told that the definitions given by them would be used in a research study. Many students do not look at research in a serious manner. Therefore perhaps they did not want to take the time and did not approach the task seriously.

According to multicultural education experts, multicultural education is not a course or a set of courses. Instead, multicultural education is a process, an on going process. It is a climate which is perceived, felt, seen, lived in, and experienced by the learners. In this climate multicultural education is not taught; it occurs. Perhaps higher levels of multicultural education are attained when classroom instruction is combined with the right climate.

Conclusions

From the results of this investigation it is concluded statistically that 65% of the Fall 1992 teacher education graduates at Eastern Kentucky University, according to the scoring guide used in this investigation, had acquired an awareness level in multicultural education. Ten percent had some understanding and knowledge about it. Compared to the 19% who were below the level of awareness few had achieved the level where they accepted, respected, or valued multicultural education.

To draw other conclusions from these results one needs to look at the goal(s) of a teacher training institution vis a vis multicultural education. Is multicultural education addressed in the teacher education curricula because it is mandated by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and because it is a criteria of the National Council For the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) or is it addressed because the teacher education institution is committed to it in its mission? If multicultural education is driven by the former then the goal is to achieve it regardless of the level. In this case an awareness level is adequate and the institution is successful in its multicultural education effort. If the goal of the institution is to prepare preservice teachers to function effectively in a multicultural society then the institution needs to seriously examine its current effort in multicultural education.

References

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Table 1. Current and Projected Percentages of the Total U. S. Population and Ethnic Distribution, 1980 - 2080

Ethnicity	1980	2000	2040	2080
White, non-Hispanic	79.9	71.7	59.0	49.8
Black	11.7	13.0	14.6	14.7
Hispanic	6.5	10.8	18.0	23.4
Asians and others	2.0	4.3	8.3	12.0
Percentage Increase/Decrease				
White, non-Hispanic		-8.2	-12.7	-10.0
Black		+1.3	+ 1.6	+ 0.1
Hispanic		+4.3	+ 7.2	+ 5.4
Asians and others		+2.3	+ 4.0	+ 3.7

Source: Fradd, S. (1987). The changing focus of bilingual education. In S. Fradd & W. Tikunoff (eds.), Bilingual education and and bilingual special education: A guide for administrators. (pp. 1-44). Boston: Little Brown and Company.

Table 2. KERA's Valued Learners Outcome
Related to Multicultural Education

1.1. 3. Observing: Students construct meaning from messages communicated in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes through observing.
(non-oral communication and body language are both highly related to culture. Without knowledge of culture mis-communication is quite likely to occur.)

1.1. 4. Listening: Students construct meaning from messages communicated in a variety of ways for a variety of purposes through listening.
(A majority of our students have problems with NTE's Communication Skills test because they cannot understand the different accent on the tape. Exposure to and interaction with people of diverse back grounds is necessary for students to successfully achieve this outcome.)

1.1.11. Writing: Students communicate ideas and information to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes in a variety of modes through writing.
(Given the changing demographics, the audience is now very diverse. To be effective in communication the communicator has to know the diverse backgrounds of their audience).

1.1.12. Speaking: Students communicate ideas and information to a variety of audiences for a variety of purposes in a variety of modes through speaking.
(Again the audience, even in a classroom, is now quite diverse)

2.3. 3 Structure and Function of Social Systems: Students recognize varying social groupings and institutions and address issues of importance to members of them, including beliefs, customs, norms, roles, equity, order, and change.
(Reference to diversity is quite explicit here)

2.3. 4. Cultural Diversity: Students interact effectively and work cooperatively with the diverse ethnic and cultural groups of our nation and world.
(This outcome is very explicit. It is also important to note that the emphasis is on ethnic and cultural diversity.

2.3. 8. Interpersonal Relationships: Students observe, analyze, and interpret human behaviors to acquire a better understanding of self, others, and human relationship.
(In a diverse society, others also include people from diverse cultures).

2.4. 2. Analysis of Forms: Students analyze their own and others' artistic products and performances.
("Others" include people of diverse backgrounds and cultures.)

2.4. 4. Cultural Heritage: Through their productions and performances or interpretations, students show an understanding of the influence of time, place, personality, and society on the arts and humanities.
(In the context of cultural heritage, place includes other than one's own.)

2.4. 5. Cultural Diversity: Students recognize differences and commonalities in the human experience through their productions, performances, or interpretations.
(Cultural diversity is quite explicit in this outcome.)

2.4. 6. Language: Students complete tasks, make presentations, and create models that demonstrate awareness of the diversity of forms, structures, and concepts across languages and how they may interrelate.
(The concept of diversity is again quite explicit in this outcome.)

2.4. 7. Second Language Proficiency: Students understand and communicate in a second language.
(Acquisition of a foreign language is included in multicultural education.)

3.1. 3. Adaptability and flexibility: Students demonstrate the ability to be adaptable and flexible through appropriate tasks and project.
(In the context of self-sufficiency, adaptability and flexibility are necessary in a culturally diverse society.)

4.1. 1. Interpersonal Skills: Students effectively use interpersonal skills.
(Today multicultural education is a must for effective interpersonal skills.)

4.1. 2. Productive Team Membership: Students use productive team members skills.
(Multicultural education is essential to be a team member).

4.1. 3. Consistent, Responsive, and Caring Behavior: Students individually demonstrate consistent, responsive, and caring behavior.
(In a culturally diverse society, multicultural education is necessary for caring behavior.)

4.1. 4. Rights and Responsibilities for Self and Others: Students demonstrate the ability to accept the rights and responsibilities for self and others.
(To accept the rights of others, multicultural education is necessary.)

4.1. 5. Multicultural and World View: Students demonstrate an understanding of, appreciation for, and sensitivity to a multicultural and world view.
(Multicultural education is quite explicit in this outcome. The scope of multicultural education is also noteworthy.)

4.1. 6. Open Mind to Alternative Perspectives: Students demonstrate an open mind to alternative perspectives.
(Alternative perspectives also point to diversity.)

5.1. 1. Critical Thinking: Students use critical thinking skills in a variety of situations.
(Given the changing demographics a variety of situations would very likely include situations resulting from cultural differences.)

6.1. 1. Applying Multiple Perspectives: Students address situations (e.g., topics, problems, decisions, products) from multiple perspectives and produce presentations or products that demonstrate a broad understanding. Examples of perspectives include: economic, social, cultural, political, historic, physical, technical, aesthetic, environmental, and personal.
(Multicultural education is quite explicit in this outcome.)

Comments in parentheses are investigator's interpretations and explanations. Investigator is also responsible for underlining.

Table 3. Number of Subjects By Their Majors

Early Elementary, K-4	65	-5
Middle Grade	15	
Special Education	13	-1
Music Education	8	
Early Elementary and Middle Grade	5	
Physical Education	4	
Business Education	3	
Blank	2	
Total	115	109

Table 4 . Scoring Guide

0. The definition given is completely irrelevant or a blank sheet of paper has been turned in.

1. Demonstrates awareness of the existence of cultural differences/diversity.

2. Demonstrates some understanding and knowledge of cultural differences or cultural diversity.

3. An indication that the individual accepts, and/or appreciates cultural diversity.

4. An indication of respect, admiration, or regard for other cultures.

5. An indication that the writer values cultural diversity, sees some usefulness, significance or merit in it.

6. An indication that the author encourages, promotes, advances, or fosters cultural diversity.

Table 5. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS PROFILE

FILE: SULTANA N= 109

MEASURE	:	VALUE
MEAN	:	1.40596
MEDIAN	:	1.25
MODE (31 ITEMS)	:	1.25
RANGE	:	5.5
MINIMUM VALUE	:	0
MAXIMUM VALUE	:	5.5
SAMPLE VARIANCE	:	.90369
SAMPLE STD DEV	:	.95063
POP VARIANCE	:	.8954
POP STD DEV	:	.94626
SKEWNESS	:	1.78644
KURTOSIS	:	4.17082

Table 6. RANKED ITEMS DISPLAY FILE: SULTANA

0 0 0 0 0 (5)

.25 .25 (2)

.5 .5 .5 .5 .5 .5 .5 .5 .5 (9)

.75 .75 .75 .75 .75 (5)

1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 (22)

1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25
1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25
1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25
1.25 1.25 1.25 1.25 (31)

1.5 1.5 1.5 1.5 1.5 1.5 1.5 1.5 1.5 1.5 1.5 (11)

1.75 1.75 1.75 1.75 1.75 1.75 (6)

2 (1)

2.25 2.25 2.25 (3)

2.5 (1)

2.75 2.75 2.75 2.75 2.75 (5)

3 (1)

3.25 3.25 (2)

3.75 (1)

4 (1)

4.25 (1)

4.75 (1)

5.5 (1)

Table 7. SULTANA FREQUENCY TABLE N= 109
(USED .5 INTERVAL)

CLASS	<LO>--LIMITS--<HI>		F	%
1	0.0	.49999	7	6
2	.5	.99999	14	13
3	1.0	1.49999	53	49
4	1.5	1.99999	17	16
5	2.0	2.49999	4	4
6	2.5	2.99999	6	6
7	3.0	3.49999	3	3
8	3.5	3.99999	1	1
9	4.0	4.49999	2	2
10	4.5	4.99999	1	1
11	5.0	5.49999	0	0
12	5.5	5.99999	1	1